

The Iranian-Turkish Rivalry and Influence in the Reality and Developments of the Political Conflict in Syria During the Period (2011-2017)

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Abstract

This study aims mainly at analyzing the reality of the Iranian-Turkish competition to expand their political and military influence in Syria. To achieve the objectives of the study and to answer its question, the study seeks to verify the following hypothesis: There is a correlation between the Turkish and Iranian political interests in Syria. The study concluded that Iran seeks to strengthen the power of the Syrian regime and its role in Syria at the expense of the Syrian opposition supported by Turkey, which seeks to reduce the Kurds in northern Syria. The conflict in Syria has given a definite shape to the relations between Turkey and Iran. The Syrian crisis has contributed to the spread of Iranian-Turkish relations according to the differences over the crisis. It is possible to say that the events of the "Arab Spring" in general and the Syrian events in particular have produced a complex geo-strategic reality in the Middle East region, which has emerged mainly in the competition between Turkey and Iran.

Introduction:

Turkey has sought to strengthen its regional position by making it eligible to act as a mediator in the Middle East by playing an active regional role in the Arab region after its chances of joining the European Union have declined and started heading south towards the Arab region, according to purely Turkish calculations. According to the Turkish foreign policy architect, Dao wood Oğlu, in his book "Strategic Depth" in which he expressed his firm convictions that his country has a strategic position and qualities that qualifies it to play a more active role in international politics than a bridge between East and West. Leave the ambition in the region that made observers describe them as "neo-Ottoman," while Iran has developed regional tools brilliantly after the collapse of the regional system taking advantage of regional alliances and its geographical location overlooking the Arabian Gulf and its ability to disrupt the passage of oil to world markets in addition to the ideological dimension of sectarian. According to this scenario, after more than a quarter century of Islamic revolution in 1979, Iran became the sectarian authority in the world, and on this basis all the armed operations of the sectarian groups became in Iran's regional interests and because of the absence of a clear Arab project, only two projects remained in the region. The first American that aims to impose a new Middle East under Israeli leadership. The second is a new Middle East, but an Iranian (sectarian) one.

The Turkish-Iranian conflict is due to the imposition of influence and domination over Syria to ancient historical stages, due to geographical proximity and strategic importance of its location in the Arab region. Syrian-Iranian relations have been a strategic alliance since the success of the Islamic revolution in Iran in 1989. Turkey and Iran have different positions in the conflict in Syria. While Iran supports the Syrian regime and Iran succeeded militarily in controlling areas controlled by the Syrian regime, Turkey supported the Syrian opposition and conducted military operations in northern Syria, but the Russian-Turkish understanding on finding a way out of the Syrian crisis made Turkey is a stronger position despite the fact that Iran continues to emphasize that its militias will not leave Syria and the significance of the Iranian-Turkish rivalry in the light of developments in the conflict in Syria. This study is intended to clarify the nature of Iranian-Turkish influence in Syria during the period 2011-2017.

The problem of the study: The Arab region has undergone important strategic changes since the US occupation of Iraq in 2003 and the events of the Arab Spring 2011, which contributed to the emergence of the influence of the international and regional forces of Turkey and Iran. Where the two countries are competing to expand their influence in the Arab region in light of the weakness of the Arab regional system and the ongoing developments witnessed by most Arab countries. Turkey and Iran are two regional powers that are rising. Their interests extend beyond their geographical borders, in light of the intertwined areas of influence between them, especially in Iraq

and Syria .Thus, this issue highlights the problem of the current study in its attempt answer the following main question:

What are the nature and forms of Iranian-Turkish rivalry and influence in the reality and developments of the political conflict in Syria during the period (2011-2017)?

The importance of the study: The practical importance of this study is what can be added to the process in this area and contribute to the analysis of the dimensions of Iranian-Turkish competition in Syria .The analysis will contribute to increase the awareness of decision makers in the Arab countries of the risks of competition between them on the future of conflict in Syria.

Objectives of the study: The study aims mainly at analyzing the reality of the Iranian-Turkish competition to expand their political and military influence in Syria.

Hypothesis of the study: To achieve the objectives of the study and answer its question, the study seeks to verify the following hypothesis: There is a correlation between Turkish and Iranian political interests in Syria and the positions of the states of the developments of the political conflict in Syria during the period (2011-2017).

Methodology of the study:

The study is based on the comparative analysis method. This method is considered one of the most descriptive studies. Most of the descriptive studies reveal the nature of the phenomenon and the interpretation of the available information. Comparative or analytical comparative studies attempt to explain how and where the phenomenon occurs. The main objective of this study is to understand which variables are the cause (independent variable) and which is the result (dependent variable) of a particular phenomenon (Kalalda, Jouda, dt): 201). The Comparative analysis is an important part of any scientific study in any science (1987: 17). The researcher relied on this approach to analyze and compare the nature and tools of Iranian-Turkish competition to expand their influence in Syria.

Terminology of study:

Iran's strategy: the "20-year-old Iranian strategy" (2005-2025), an official document that set out future visions of the Iranian role in 20 years. According to this strategy, Iran is supposed to enjoy international privacy and become an international force and inspiration for the Muslim world, (Baztab, 2005: 12). For the purposes of this study, the researcher defines Iranian strategy in Syria as the Iranian plan to support and enhance Iranian influence in Syria by providing financial and military support to the Syrian regime (Bashar al-Assad regime).

The Turkish strategy: The Turkish strategy aims to expand the "fan of its options" in the face of attempts to isolate it (Bakeer, 2013). For the purposes of this study, the researcher defines Turkish strategy as representing programs and plans with specific goals, Turkey in the Arab region from a perspective based on mutual interests, interdependence and economic interests.

The term Competition is a process of interaction that accompanies the preparation of a political decision, an activity in which two or more parties seek to achieve the same goal. Thus, competition varies as much as from one society to another and within one society (Kadiri, 2007: 20).For the purpose of this study, the researcher defines competition as a level of conflict between Iran and Turkey to enhance their role in the political conflict in Syria.

The term Syrian crisis: the events began in the city of Daraa where the security (according to the story of opposition activists) arrested 15 children; following slogans calling for freedom and demanding the overthrow of the regime on the wall of their school on 26 February 2011. In the midst of that , there was a call to demonstrate o a page in Face book that wasn't know who was behind it, a group of activists responded to it on Tuesday, March 15, 2011 who protested against tyranny, repression and corruption and suppression of freedoms, the arrest of the children of Daraa, and the humiliation suffered by their parents, according to the Syrian opposition, while the supporters of the regime It was a conspiracy against the axis of resistance and Arab reluctance (Abdel Ghaffar, 2015: 83).

Variables of the study:

The Independent variable: A set of motives and variables that stimulate Turkish-Iranian competition in Syria.

The dependent Variable: reality and future of Iranian-Turkish rivalry in Syria 2011-2017.

The Previous studies:

The most important studies related to the subject of the study are the following:

The Arabic Studies:

A study of ADMI (2014) entitled "The Turkish-Iranian competition over the Areas of Influence in the Middle East, 1996-2014." The study aimed to demonstrate the Turkish-Iranian rivalry and the most competitive areas of influence in the Middle East. The study showed that because of the importance of this region, the competition was intensified between the two countries after the events of September 11, 2001 and the collapse of Saddam Hussein's regime in 2003, to extend their influence in the region and to use all their historical, geographic and cultural data to confirm their interdependence and to demonstrate their model as the most appropriate and ideal model. Then, the Arab movement started, where this competition was explained clearly, especially after the movement of Syria and contrasts the position of both Iran and Turkey. The first is a supporter of the system and the second is defender of the popular movement of the Syrian and tucked the Syrian opposition, and this is what sharpened the relationship between the two countries.

The Study of the **Al Edwan** (2013), entitled the Regional Strategy for Turkey and Iran towards the Middle East during the period 2002-2013. The study aimed at identifying the main aspects of the regional strategy of Turkey and Iran in the Middle East for the period 2002-2013, Regional, and international levels on the nature of their regional strategies in the Middle East. The study started from the hypothesis that "the local, regional and international environmental factors contributed to the formation of the regional strategy of Turkey and Iran in the Middle East for the period 2002-2013. The study concluded that the local, regional and international environmental factors contributed to the formation of the regional strategy of Turkey and Iran in the Middle East for the period 2002-2013. The study recommended on formulating an Arab strategy to deal with international and regional changes and intensifying cooperation and coordination efforts in international and regional forums in order to address sectarian, ethnic and ethnic trends in the Iranian project.

Bakeer study (2013), entitled: The Geostrategic Dimensions of the Iranian and Turkish politicians towards Syria. This study aimed at searching in the background of the Iranian and Turkish positions of the Syrian revolution, the motives and reasons associated with their projects in the Arab region and the implications of their policy on them. The study concluded that Syria occupies a geostrategic position in the region; The Fertile Crescent is of great importance, especially for the Iranian and Turkish projects. A small number of countries have geographical sections open to distant but interactive geopolitical dimensions, in addition to being a transport complex and an intersection of influence in the Fertile Crescent region to the east, west, north and south. In addition to being with front borders with Israel, which gave it great importance. All of this has allowed them to play an important role in the Fertile Crescent region.

Foreign Studies:

Larabi's study, Alireza (2015),

Entitled: Turkish-Iranian relations in the Middle East are changing

The study showed that Turkish-Iranian cooperation has increased significantly. Turkey's need for energy, oil and natural gas resources in Iran which has been an important factor in increasing Turkish-Iranian cooperation. Iran is the second largest supplier of natural gas to Turkey after Russia. Iran is also an important source of crude oil. However, the degree of cooperation between the two countries should not be overstated. Historically, Turkey and Iran have been competing rather than being close partners. While they may share certain economic and security interests, their interests run counter to many levels throughout the Middle East. The two countries have different political identities as well as radically different ideologies.

The study by **Catherine Brown et al.** (2011)

United: The United States of America, Turkey and Iran: Strategic Options for the Next Decade

It is an eight-pronged English study, began with a brief study of Turkish-Israeli relations and attempted to understand the reality of Turkish-Iraqi relations, the role of Turkey I NATO, in addition to nuclear weapons issues in the Middle East, as well as the issue of politicizing oil in the Middle East

What distinguishes this study from previous studies?

The previous studies presented topics within the framework of the present study regarding the Iranian and Turkish attempts to try to intervene directly in the Arab region. The study is characterized by the fact that it examines the competition and conflict between Turkey and Iran as regional powers that play an influential role in the Arab region. As it presents the development in the Iranian-Turkish regional competition in a systematic way between the two countries, and the variables dealt with in the current study have not been linked and dealt with in previous studies.

First: *The Regional determinants of Iranian and Turkish policy in the Arab region:*

Iran is aware of the importance of the regional dimension to its foreign policy. Therefore, Iran has exploited its resources and capabilities to expand its role in the Arab region by building a network of interests with some centers of power and political movements (Hezbollah, Houthis, Shiite militias in Iraq, Hamas and Islamic Jihad) through which it managed to influence the Arab political events. Iran succeeded in investing political events in the Arab region in two stages: the first stage after the invasion of Kuwait in 1990 by adopting a neutral position to satisfy the United States and the Arab regimes that supported it. It aimed to create a climate and incentive for Western countries, including the United States to develop its relations with Iran, and invested in the decline in the peace process and its stalemate between Palestinians and Israelis and American positions supporting Israel, to appear before the Arab public opinion as a party capable of defending the Palestinian cause, and its ability to confront.

The second is after the US occupation of Iraq in 2003, which strengthened its influence within the Iraqi state and the centers of political forces, and changed the balance of power in the region to its advantage and made it the largest regional force with an effective weight in the region. This has reflected on its regional and international relations, and its relations with the Arab countries have been an important determinant of its foreign policy, due to the intertwining of strategic interests between them and the Gulf States (Makki, 2010: 22).

Iran has realized the regional dimensions of the Turkish role in the Arab region. The relations between them have been intertwined for hundreds of years. Consequently, the Turkish-Iranian relations are based on the long history of the Ottoman-Persian conflict for regional hegemony. Economy, and the conclusion of agreements between the two countries, but did not prevent Turkey from accusing the government and non-governmental sources of Iran's involvement in supporting the activities of radical Islamic organizations of Turkey, especially the Revolutionary Islamic Movement and branches of Hezbollah. These tensions led to the severing of relations between the two countries, but Turkey's concern not to escalate the tension after the US occupation of Iraq was in line with the following (Al-Sultani, Al-Shammari, 2015: 360)

- a) The two countries agree to reject the partition of Iraq. It is in Turkey's interest to work to contain the Kurdish issue and to not develop it, especially in light of the new developments related to the Syrian file.
- b) To establish an understanding between the two countries on security control in the border areas and exchange of information between the security forces of the two countries with regard to the tension on their common border. In light of the common interests of Iran and Turkey, Turkey has played an active role as a mediator in the Iranian-European crisis over the Iranian nuclear file and Iran's revolutionary projects and the ongoing confrontation with Western countries. Turkey has a diplomatic, and influential role in the Middle East and adopt a project for a modern civil Islamic state that can be followed in the region.

In light of the regional importance of Iran and Turkey due to their economic and demographic strength, geographical location and its interrelationship with the peoples of the region and its countries. In light of the noticeable change in the balance of power that the Arab world is experiencing, it is clear that there is a real Iranian-Turkish relations and interests that will be translated into actual policies aimed at playing a pivotal and effective role in various Arab issues as Islamic issues of concern to the Muslim world as a whole and attempts to dissolve the region in an Islamic entity on the one hand and the Middle East on the other. Iran is in the regional equation existing in the Middle East a major force, due to its capabilities of economic, military and big population, and by other factors such as location - strategic. Turkey is also a regional power in light of the elements that have been presented previously

The Middle East region has historically been associated with an influential role for regional actors, especially Turkey and Iran. This has been linked to the perspective of international actors on the strategic importance of the Middle East region, its control of global shipping lines and its enormous economic wealth, especially oil. In this

way, Iran's foreign policy is based on the principle of "exporting the revolution" and the policy of the coalition. These alliances form the basis of the Iranian project in the Arab region. Since its Islamic revolution, it has sought to form alliances in different ways in order to rely on it in the implementation of its project. It is noted that Iran has maintained these patterns precisely since the outbreak of the war. The Iran-Hezbollah-Syria axis, the ideological pattern with the Shiites in the Arab world, and the economic pattern in its alliance with Russia, India, the Central Asian countries and others, while Turkey adopted a policy of alliances, cultural and political promotion of political project, which depends on the expansion of trade relations with the Arab countries, and consolidate its relations with Arab countries through resolving political problems an reset, and its position on the Palestinian issue.

Second: *The nature of the political conflict in Syria*

The Syrian opposition has begun to show the developments of the Syrian crisis, represented by groups and individuals who demand regime change in Syria and oppose the Baath Party government. In 2011, some opposition groups in Syria followed a new path after the Syrian crisis. These groups united to form the Syrian National Coalition and gained international support. The opposition was recognized as a partner in the dialogue to get out of the Syrian crisis. Libya was the only country to recognize the Syrian National Coalition. A new opposition group was formed in 2012 under the name of the National Coalition of Revolutionary Forces and the Syrian Opposition. The GCC recognized it as the "legitimate representative of the Syrian people" and as "representative of the aspirations of the Syrian people" Arab countries. Syria's map became a military map, shared by three conflicting parties (the Syrian regime, the opposition and the Dai'sh organization). The military map on the ground in Syria became rapidly and thorny as well because of the division of areas between the conflicting parties. The Syrian opposition, represented by the Free Army and supported by the Nasra Front, is gaining control over areas in Aleppo, Raqqa, Deir al-Zour, Idlib, Ghouta al-Sharqiyah, Daraa and Hama, and the organization of the Islamic State in Iraq and Al-Sham extended its control over several areas in Qamishli, Al-Bashar al-Assad and Hezbollah militias on most of the major cities in the provinces (Aminu, 2014).

In the light of the existence of real political solutions, a state of crisis emerged in Syria due to the intertwining of the crisis, the multiple levels of regional and international conflict, and the lack of political initiatives. These suggested solutions include:

First: the conflict in Syria falls within three circles: regional and international conflict, regime conflict, popular revolution, and conflict against cross-border organizations. The regional and international conflict is characterized by continuity and conflict because of the conflicting interests and interests of international and regional actors. The crisis situation in Syria, which confirms the maturation of the climate of bonded convergence with regional and international conditions and data that help put forward an initiative to get out of the crisis (Muslim Brotherhood Conference in Brussels, 2011).

The conflict at the level of the opposing forces and the regime is more complex, given the complexity of the factors driving the continuity of the crisis. The opposition and the regime have revealed a series of conflicts that vary from region to region, four in the opposition and four in the regime. Conflicts associated with the opposition are: political conflict within the political opposition components based on different ideological and political rules, different international alliances, conflict with the regime and its militias, and the conflict of major military organizations among them fueled by ideological and political differences and military conflict within geographical unity.

The conflict between the political and military forces of the revolution and a possible social conflict with the supportive social environment, the causes of its outbreak being available, the struggle of economic interests among the warlords and a latent conflict with national and non-national militias fighting against its opponents Assad's regime recognizes that the idea of continuing war is a housing factor for the eruption of these conflicts, which excludes any response to any policy initiative for solution (Amino, 2014).

Second: The security equation in Syria which is characterized by a great overlap between the concepts of regional security and international security. has turned the Syrian territory from a purely popular revolution to a regional conflict interact components, and therefore the solution of the security equation in one way or another requires international or regional convergence at the least. The features that are linked to regional geopolitical files and with determinants imposed within the international community.

The third: Syrian opposition conference was held on June 28, 2011 under the slogan "Syria for all under a civil democratic state", which was based in Damascus. It was attended by 200 opposition and independent Syrian

figures. It was the first conference to be held since 1963 in Syria. on 4 July 2011, another conference was held in Damascus under the title "The Independent Parliamentarians Initiative for Modern Syria", in which 60 members of the People's Assembly participated. The participants considered six points for the possibility of implementation within 12 months, which Secures a shift towards a pluralistic democratic system. As a result of the events in al-Ghouta following the chemical weapons attack in August 2013, Syria joined an agreement confirming the destruction of chemical weapons declared. These weapons were removed and destroyed in 2014. The evidence suggests that the Syrian government launched a chlorine-bomb attack in three areas in northern Syria, this attack is a banned attack under the Chemical Weapons Convention, but Syria has not adhered to it (a Muslim Brotherhood conference in Brussels, 2011).

Third: the Iranian-Turkish competition for influence in Syria:

The two countries sought to expand their influence in Syria, especially after the Syrian revolution in 2011, the developments in the conflict in Syria and the discovery of gas, which increased the competition between the two countries to play an active role in Syria.

Iranian Influence in Syria:

Iran and Syria, after the Islamic revolution in Iran, sought to establish an alliance between the two countries. There are a number of factors that have formed permanent features and possible determinants of this alliance. The most important of these factors are as follows (Hussein, Khalidi 1997: 149)

- The common interests of the two countries, and the vital role of the Shiites in Lebanon for both Syria and Iran, although the considerations are different for both sides.
- Considerations relating to the regional balance of power, and maintaining the political and strategic interests of the two countries.
- In the region of volatile and unstable alliances in the Middle East, the Syrian-Iranian relationship has proved more stable than any other relationship in the region.
- Protection of the Shiite community in Syria and the protection of the holy places in it.

Dimensions and mechanisms of Iranian intervention in Syria after 2011

Iran's vision of its relationship with Syria is based on two principles. First, Iran's conviction that the Syrian-Iranian alliance could affect US projects in the Arab region. On the other hand, Iran is aware that its alliance with Syria as well as Palestinian groups and Hezbollah constitutes a united front against Israeli policies in the region. The second principle of rapprochement between the two countries is the existence of an international consensus on the isolation of Iran and Syria by the international and regional powers which has existed between the two countries since the outbreak of the Islamic Revolution of Iran to a very special relationship, at the expense of its position in the Arab system, despite the occurrence of occasional tensions in the Syrian-Iranian relations, especially Syria's support for a strong central government in Iraq, in addition to participating in the peace conference sponsored by The United States of America in Madrid in 1991, but both Damascus and Tehran have reduced their differences, Tehran is a reliable ally and of great importance to Syria (Zu'bi, 2009: 169)

Iran has recognized the strategic importance of strengthening its cooperation with Syria, as evidenced by the agreement of the two parties on a joint defense agreement between Tehran and Damascus, although this alliance began a tactic rather than a strategic pact. A major economic and trade agreement, including a cooperation agreement in the field of gas and oil and other agreements in the field of roads and electrical connections between Syria and Iran through Iraq (Zoubi, 2009: 172).

The economic relations between the two countries developed after the establishment of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the context of the political rapprochement between the Iranian and Syrian regimes against the backdrop of Iran's war with Iraq. Under this framework, Iran has pledged to export about 9 million tons of oil annually to Syria in return for the export of Syria between 300 to 400 Thousand tons of phosphate per year to Iran, and the development of the size of Iranian investments in Syria with the assumption of President Bashar al-Assad the ruling of Syria. The size of Iranian investments in Syria in 2006 reached to "more than 400 million dollars," and in 2012 as a result of the announcement of the two countries plans to expand Iranian projects in Syria, the size of

investments between the two countries reached to 10 billion dollars, while the Iranian exports to Syria during the year 2016 was approximately \$ 29 million (Abdul Aziz, 2017).

Iranian support policies for the Syrian regime (Bashar al-Assad) in light of the Syrian crisis:

Iran has adopted a number of key mechanisms to support the Syrian regime under the conflict in Syria, which began in 2011, the most important of which are:

- Providing military and security consultations to Syrian regular forces

Iran's military support has emerged to protect the Syrian regime and to ensure that it does not fall as a major concern for Iran in the Arab region. Therefore, Iran has provided its expertise in the field of military consultation to the Syrian regular army by sending some military leaders to Syria, in addition to sending Shiite volunteers to participate in the conflict and urged Hezbollah to support the Syrian regime.

The first is to allow the members of Iranian volunteers under the title of defending the Shiite holy places, including the shrine of Sayeda Zeinab in Damascus. In this way, Iran sought to avoid direct involvement in the military conflict against the armed opposition forces. At least officially, to the Iranian security and military institutions, with the exception of some experts who played a prominent role in directing the course of military battles between the regular forces and the opposition forces? Iran has denied the claims of international and regional powers that have indicated an Iranian military presence in Syria. On February 25, 2014, Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Jawad Zarif confirmed that Iran had no military presence in Syria (Ankir, 2014).

The second was to participate in the establishment of Shiite militias, including Iraqi and Afghan elements, to contribute to the military battles against the opposition forces in Syria, where Iran supported the establishment of militias such as Abu Fadl al-Abbas Brigades, and behind the sending of elements belonging to organizations such as Asaib Ahl al-Haq, Brigade of Islam ", and " Badr Corps "of Iraq to fight in Syria. Iran also turned into a "corridor" for the transfer of some Afghan Shiites to Syria in order to support the Syrian regime's efforts in the face of opposition forces. Some estimates suggest that the number of militia elements that helped Iran train in Syria ranges from 30-40,000 belonging to different nationalities (Rabei, 2015).

The third was coordination with the Lebanese Hezbollah, which actively participated in the military confrontations against the armed opposition and played a prominent role in the regime's success in controlling the Qusair area for its strategic importance, as well as the Lebanese border, which was infiltrated by some opposition forces, Which has dealt many blows to many of the objectives of Hezbollah and Iran, Iran has been keen to move from its secret support to announce its public support for the Syrian regime, which can be interpreted in light of its desire to send many letters to the regional and international forces that support the Syrian opposition forces and seeks to Drop Al Assad (Ankeer, 2014).

- Supporting the Syrian regime by rejecting the idea of forming a transitional governing body

Although Iran welcomes the efforts made by United Nations representative Kofi Annan, Lakhdar Brahimi and Stephane de Mistura to reach a settlement to the Syrian crisis, it has never supported the idea of forming a transitional governing body for several reasons, including:

First, this idea was overtaken by the rapid events in Syria, which no longer correspond to the data imposed by the balance of power within Syria between the regime and the opposition forces, which tend in favor of the regime . That was due the support received both militarily and financially by Iran and its allies of Shiite forces and organizations in Iraq, Lebanon and Afghanistan, or at the political level by Russia and China, which prevented condemnation of the Syrian regime by using the veto three times in the Security Council (Ankeer, 2014).

Second, it requires significant concessions by the Syrian regime, especially with regard to the removal of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, which is unacceptable to the power circles in Syria or Iran, in which the regime regained the lead from opposition forces facing a state of division and fragmentation has reduced its ability to drop it.

Thirdly, Iran seeks to re-establish international legitimacy for the Syrian regime by emphasizing that it is an important party in the war against terrorism and specifically against the Da'ash organization (Rabei, 2015)

As part of Iran's strategic and political aims, Iran has established ideological and political influence, adopting its first ties with the elite of the regime, businessmen, and cultural and popular events. Despite the problems and challenges faced by Iran's influence in Syria, Iran continued to grow in the field of economic cooperation with the regime. Where it created dozens of companies, and increased the size of Iranian investments in Syria in parallel with the escalation of political and cultural relations, which were the ambitions of Iran in the Syrian reality, and often expressed by Iranian officials openly and continuously. The Syrian revolution against the Syrian regime of President Bashar al-Asad was an important motive for Iran's influence inside Syrian territory. Iran aligned itself with Assad's regime in the face of the revolution of the Syrians and escalated its political, cultural and economic activities. Iran has become the decisive force in the regime's orientations, its political and decisions. Thus, Iranian influence has political, military, economic, social and cultural expressions based on Syrian territory.

Turkish influence in Syria:

The relationship between Turkey and Syria entered into a period of reconciliation after the relations reached the stage of war at the end of 1998. The breakthroughs were the deterioration of the differences between Ankara and Damascus, which focused on a number of issues related to the geopolitical location and the regional role of Turkey and Syria. The most important of which are the Kurdish issue, the issue of sharing the Euphrates River, the issue of the Iskandarun Brigade, and the issue of the military-security alliance between Ankara and Tel Aviv.

The escalation of the Turkish-Syrian differences reached the conclusion of the two sides on 20/10/1998 for a security agreement called the "Adana Agreement" which ended the Turkish-Syrian crisis and opened the door for dialogue between the two countries. Damascus affirmed that it refused to allow the PKK, In exchange for Turkey's failure to allow any activity threatening Syria's stability from its territory in what was interpreted as a reference to Turkish-Israeli military cooperation. This agreement was described by Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shara as "balanced and a security agreement between two security committees. The security forces stopped by the Turkish side since the year 1995, and Syria started to deal with this crisis from a long-term strategic vision because we do not want Turkey to become an enemy of the Arabs. "Relations between the two countries improved before 2011, but these relations declined significantly because of Turkey's position on the Syrian revolution, and its demand for the departure of the regime of Bashar al-Assad (Zakaria, 2012: 23).

As the events in Syria after 2011 witnessed a major development in the Turkish position on the crisis in Syria, when Turkey began to declare that "the Syrian crisis has turned from an internal Syrian affair, to an internal Turkish affair," Turkey has indicated on more than one occasion that the continuation of what is happening in Syria will inflict more losses on Turkey than it bears on more than one level (Bakeer, 2013).

Turkey found itself in a real crisis of division. On the one hand, it did not want to take harsh measures against the Syrian regime. On the other hand, it found itself unable to compromise on with this regime. It was confronted with an international will with multiple goals and agendas. In particular, and still called for internationalization of the crisis and the repetition of the Libyan model. Turkey tried to distance itself by not being influenced by the Turkish popular pressure to escalate Ankara's anti-Syrian stance.

In view of the length of the overlapping border between Turkey and Syria (more than 800 km), and the interrelationship between the peoples of the two countries, familial, cultural and social, Turkey is afraid that the Syrian escalation will plunge it into refugees, and thus the Syrian problem will move into Turkey. Turkey has therefore set up camps across the Turkish Red Crescent within Turkish territory, with many obligations. The Turkish forces entered Turkish airspace and the international coalition forces in Syria for the first time since the outbreak of the conflict in August 2016 to the border town of "Jrables " to liberate it from the terrorist organizations that control it, foremost among them the organization "Dai'sh" and the "Democratic Union" As an extension of the PKK, which is one of the most important organizations hostile to the Turkish state. Indeed, the process of the Turkish "Euphrates" aimed to control of the city, but it continued to prevent the establishment of "Kurdish belt growing" along the Turkish-Syrian border, which extends from Afreen to Qamishli in northern Syria, which is the target of the Kurdish forces that seek to control this border region to cut off Turkish relations Turkomans in Syria, as well as their desire to address aid flowing across the Turkish border to the organization of "Dai'sh". The hidden goal of this process is the city of "Al Babb ", which is a third of the Kurds and the focus of Kurdish attention after the confrontation of the "Dai'sh" in "Manbj" and indeed the city was subjected to several raids by Turkish forces in early 2017. The Turkish move in Syria comes in the context of curbing the Kurdish influence to prevent it from exploiting the situation in Syria so as not to call for independence, which is a direct threat to Turkey, and called for Turkey to establish an area known as the "safe zone" in northern Syria

with a depth of more than 35 km and Length 110 km, extending from the town of "Jrables" to the town of "Izz Az "to reach the town of" Deir Hofer "of the city of Al Babb (Abdel Aziz, 2017).

The Iranian-Turkish dispute was deepened in the disrespect of the Iranian regime and sectarian militias to the ceasefire agreement signed between the opposition and the Syrian regime in Turkey on December 30, 2016. Iran also rejects Turkish demands to remove all foreign organizations and militias, including Hezbollah from Syria. In contrast, Turkey supports the Syrian opposition and believes that stability and political transition cannot take place in the presence of Bashar Assad, who is responsible for the killing of more than 600 thousand Syrians and the displacement of half the population of Syria, and therefore the tension between Ankara and Tehran will have a profound impact on The conflict in Syria will have an impact on Turkish-Iranian relations in the future (Al-Sawy, 2017).

Turkey and Iran have political, economic and security interests in Syria. Both sides are working to expand their influence in Syria by supporting Iran's regime, while Turkey supports the Syrian opposition. , Especially after Iran joined both Russia and Turkey in the Astana talks to resolve the Syrian crisis, the differences between the Turks and the Iranians in Syria was gradually surfaced, and tension between Turkey and Iran emerged in the fourth round of the Geneva negotiations (4)The Iranian side does not recognize the Geneva reference, especially the political transition in Syria, which leads to the formation of a transitional government and an end to the rule of the Assad family, which is strongly rejected by the politicians of the Iranian regime, while supporting the decisions of Geneva (1)and rejects the idea of remaining Bashar Al Assad in ruling Syria.

Despite the success of Iran and Turkey over the past six years to neutralize their differences on the conflict in Syria, but when it appeared that there is an international trend and regional support for a political settlement of the Syrian crisis, these differences are back to the forefront again, which was evident both during the Turkish tripartite talks regarding Iranian-Russian relations on 20 December 2016, or during the bilateral Turkish-Russian negotiations that ended with the declaration of a cease-fire. Here, it is possible to say that these differences reached maturity, in a way that no longer with the policy of containment or neutralization is gaining importance and special relevance in the vision of both Tehran and Ankara. However, this does not mean that the Iranian escalation against Turkey will reach an unprecedented stage especially that despite Tehran's displeasure with Turkish politics - cannot risk entering into open conflict with Turkey, at least at the current stage (Okasha, 2016).

Although senior Iranian officials welcomed Russia's efforts in cooperation with Turkey to bolster the chances of success in the Astana negotiations aimed at strengthening the Russian-Turkish ceasefire agreement of 30 December 2016, this does not negate the many concerns of Iran which is imposed by the high level of understandings ongoing Russian-Turkish, and undoubtedly the cooperation between Russia and Turkey in the fight against a duel in the city of Al Babb heightened the fears of Iran, as this could expand the scope of the role and influence of Turkey in Syria, especially with reports which Suggest that Turkey is seeking to ensure the maintenance of a military presence in the city of Al Babb even after the end of military operations launched by the forces of the Euphrates, which received the support of Russia represented in the air strikes launched by Russia against the sites of the dailies. In an interview with Al-Jazeera, 2017 Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan expressed his position on Iran's expansionist role, criticizing Iran's policy in Syria: «Tehran pursues a policy of Persian expansion and adopted expansionist policy based on Persian nationalism», continuing: «Iran wants to penetrate in Arab countries to form a Persian force», That his country «will not allow diligences territory from Syria for the benefit of other countries », which led to a strong negative Iranian reactions to the Turkish position (Abu – Sa'da, 2017).

Conclusion:

Turkish-Iranian relations and interests have been intertwined for hundreds of years. This has made contemporary Turkish-Iranian relations based on the long history of the Ottoman-Persian conflict for regional hegemony. The balanced nature of this conflict provided the basis for balanced relations that are described as neither intimate nor hostile. While taking into account the interests of the other side, despite the development of Turkish-Iranian relations, especially in the field of economy, and expansion of areas of economic cooperation and trade, this did not prevent Turkey from accusing Iran of involvement in supporting the Turkish extremist of Islamic organizations, especially the Islamic Revolutionary Movement, and branches of the Hezbollah organization, training and funding of these elements in the Iranian camps.

Turkey has pursued a double policy dominated by political deception. It has joined the US-led international coalition against Da'ish, which has colluded with it from the outset and supplied it with weapons. The Turkish parties are the biggest buyers and marketers of cheap oil sold by Damascus from Syrian and Iraqi wells. Moscow

has already issued a strong warning to Ankara that Russian airliners will bomb all the centers through which foreign fighters who join "Dai'sh", if the Turkish government allowed fighters to cross the border. Ankara is also coordinating with Riyadh and Doha to increase the military support of the Syrian armed opposition to counter Russian military intervention. Iran has been a major driving force on Syrian territory. Revolutionary Guards, Hezbollah and Abu Fadl al-Abbas militias have supported the Syrian regime but have failed to save it. Is not able to withstand, it turned out in the pursuit of the truce Zabadani and the towns of Foa and Kafriya, which in turn increased the burdens of the Russian side, and thus opened the way to limit the Iranian role.

The Results of the study:

The study concluded the following results:

The study sought to ascertain the validity of the hypothesis that "there is a correlation between the Turkish and Iranian political interests in Syria and the positions of the two states on the developments of the political conflict in Syria during the period (2011-2017)" where Iran seeks to strengthen the strength of the Syrian regime and its role in Syria at the expense of the Syrian opposition supported by Turkey, which seeks to reduce the Kurds in northern Syria, and reduce the conflict in its borders with Syria in addition to the problem of Syrian refugees in Turkey, hence the conflict in Syria has formed a specific geo-strategic position in Turkish-Iranian relations.

- The ideological differences affected the levels of Iranian-Turkish competition in the Arab region during the study period. Iran is working according to a doctrinal policy based on a sectarian basis according to the vision of the Shiite authorities, thus helping to export its revolution to neighboring countries in the Arab region.

- The Syrian crisis contributed to the spread of Iranian-Turkish relations, according to the differences on the crisis. The crisis created a state of dissonance between the two regional countries. Both have their interests in the Arab world. Therefore, the events of the "Arab Spring" which made a complex geostrategic reality in the Middle East have emerged mainly in the competition between Turkey and Iran.

- There is a Russian-Turkish rejection of the Iranian military progress because they understand the Iranian desire to declare strategic victory and control areas of influence that contradict the interests of Russia and Turkey, in addition to the outbreak of Russian-Iranian differences that would not allow Russia to expand Iran at the expense of its interests in Syria, that is Iran governed by obedience to Russian accounts. Iran is facing difficult choices. The clash with the Russian role will put it in a confrontation with everyone without exception, and will therefore respect everything that maintains its relationship with Moscow in order to avoid a major loss

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